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XVI.—IDEAS ON RHETORIC IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

I. THE VOCABULARY.

To distinguish between the course of rhetorical ideas, and the growth of style on the one hand, and of systematic rhetoric on the other, is perhaps to endeavor after too nice a distinction. Yet when we read sixteenth-century English, we may see, between the general effort to use prose with effect and the rather arid sequence of treatises on formal rhetoric, certain definite ideas on prose expression, certain views as to the best vocabulary, certain views on sentence-structure or figures of speech. The frank, vigorous prose of Latimer has style of a sort, the slight treatise of Cox has system. Neither the one thing nor the other is the opinion pro and con as to inkhorn words, for example. The following paper notes in the direction of the vocabulary only, a conscious effort to determine some fundamental principles which should obtain in the use of English as a means of literary expression.

In such a study there is always a tendency to push one's inquiries into a period where there are but hints of a possible feeling. When Caxton says¹ that he is "not learned ne knowing in the art of rethorike ne of such gaye terms as now be said in these days and used," he clearly indicates that there were others knowing in that art. Yet of the "newe eloquence" of which he elsewhere speaks² we have but little actual knowledge. There is enough to stimulate the man of letters to an idea of certain "elements of art, as balance, careful heed to longs and shorts, proportion, exquisite choice,"³ but the scholar has not as yet, so far as I know, much upon which to found a definite statement.

¹ Dedication to *Blanche and Eglantyne*.

² Prologue to *Charles the Great*.

³ Maurice Hewlett: *New Canterbury Tales*, p. 12.

When Sir Thomas More wrote the *Utopia* in Latin he probably was actuated by more reasons than one. Presumably he desired to reach the learned of all lands, and perhaps he wished especially to avoid the unlearned of his own land. The former would appreciate his ideas, the latter might take them wrongly. But a negative reason must also have been that English was hardly in his day a recognized literary language, so far at least as prose was concerned. We need not suppose that Andrew Borde, somewhat later, was expressing a universal view when he said, "The speche of England is a base speche to other noble speeches, as Italion, Castylion, and French."¹ Yet Ascham says that it would have been more honorable to his name to have written the *Toxophilus* in Latin or Greek, and adds that in the English tongue everything is done in a manner so meanly that no man can do worse.² And Elyot says, rather by the way, that certain poets "in the latine do express themselves incomparably with more grace and delectation to the reader, than our Englyssche tonge may yet comprehend."³ Prose generally develops after poetry, and at a time when Wyatt and Suney were pioneers in poetic form, we should not expect such a thing as formed prose.

There was good reason for using English, however. With the loss of the French provinces, the French language had ceased to be a rival. With the invention of printing Latin had ceased to reach all readers. The spirit of nationality demanded English: the opportunities of circulation rendered it a possibility. Later the Reformation made the vernacular necessary with one set of writers, as the Renaissance made it a favorite with another. The use of English was a practical matter; it had its relation to the interests of the day. As the beginnings of rhetoric in Greece, as its earlier development had been in Rome, as the sermon-writing of the Church had been, and the introduction of rhetoric into the study of

¹*The First Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*, E. E. T. S., p. x.

²*Toxophilus*; Ed. Arber, p. 18.

³*Boke of the Governour*; ed. Croft, I, 129.

the Civil Law, so the creation of an English prose was a practical matter to men of religion like Tyndale and Coverdale, to men of affairs like Elyot and Wilson, as well as to scholars like Cheke and Ascham.

To Sir Thomas Elyot the matter was one of patriotic feeling as much as of literature. He was a public man as well as a man of letters, perhaps more so. But he was a man of learning and he felt that it was a part of the national effort of the time to put forth his ability for the language of the country as well as for her other interests. In *The Boke of the Governour*, he propounded views upon English diction and maintained them by practice. He advocated the idea of strengthening the language by borrowing words to express ideas that could not readily be expressed in the English of his day. The idea met with acceptance, and controversy as well.

It was natural that the first question of wide interest should have concerned the vocabulary. Such had been the case in Italian, where Aretino and Bembo had been free-lance and purist, such was afterward the case in France where Rabelais and Ronsard filled roles somewhat analogous. In an effort to give the vernacular a place beside the classical tongues, it was but natural that the question of words should have first aroused discussion, for the words of one's writing were of necessity different from the words of Latin and Greek. Sentences and figures men easily thought they could imitate, but hardly words.

The vocabulary had long been a matter of interest. Caxton speaks of it. He saw the need of avoiding "old and homely terms" of "uplandish men" on the one hand, but he also disapproved of the "most curious terms of certain great clerkes."¹ But his question was largely one of dialect, where he might have gained something of the classic rhetoricians, though it does not seem that he did so. By Elyot's time the

¹*Prologue to Eneydos.*

question of dialect in literature does not seem very important, although it sometimes comes to mention even later.

Elyot's position in the matter has been long known in a general way. Croft in his edition of *The Governour* called attention to some of his statements. Elyot says that he had "intended to augment our English tongue whereby men should as well express more abundantly the thing that they conceived in their hartis . . . as also interpret out of greke, latin, or any other tongue." He adds, however, that no term was newly made by him "of a latin or french word but it is there declared so playnely by one name or another to a diligent reader that no sentence is thereby made dark or hard to understand."¹ It will be useful to extract an example or two. He speaks of "an excellent vertue whereunto we lack a name in English wherefore I am constrained to usurp a latin word, calling it *Maturity*; which worde, though it be strange and darke, yet by declaring the vertue in a few mo wordes, the name ones brought in custome, shall be as facile to understand as other words late comen out of Italy or France; and made denizens among us. *Maturity* is a meane betwene two extremities, wherin nothing lacketh or exceedeth, and is in such a state that it may neither encrease nor minish without losing the denomination of *Maturity*. The grekes in a proverb do expresse it properly in two wordes, which I can none other wyse interpret in englisshe but spede the slowly, (*Σπεύδε βραδέως*). Also of this word *Maturity*, sprang a noble and precieuse sentence, recited by Salust in the bataile againe Catiline which is in this maner or like, Consulte before thou entreprise anything, and after thou hast taken counsaile it is expedient to do it maturely. *Maturum* in latin may be interpreted ripe or redy, as frute whan it is ripe, it is at the very poynt to be gathered and eaten, and every other thyng, whan it is redy, it is at the instante after to be occupied. Therefore that word *Maturity* is translated to the actis of

¹*Boke of the Governour*, I, lxvi.

man, that whan they be done with such moderation, that nothyng in the doinge may be sene superfluous or indigent, we may say, that they be maturely done ; reserving the wordes ripe and redy to frute and other things separete from affairs as we have now in usage. And this do I now remember for the necessary augmentation of our language.

“In the excellent and most noble emperor Octavius Augustus, in whom reigned all nobility, nothing is more commended than that he had frequently in his mouthe, this word *Matura* do maturely. As he shulde have saide, do neither to moche ne to litle, to soone ne to late, to swiftly nor slowly, but in due tyme and measure. Now I trust I have sufficiently expounded the vertue called Maturitie, whiche is the meane or mediocritie betwene slouth and celeritie, comunly called spedinesse.”—*Ib.*, I, 243.

This is the longest of Elyot’s disquisitions upon his innovations, but there are one or two others which throw light on the matter.

“Magnanimity is a vertue moche commendable and also expedient to be in a governor and is as I have said a companion of Fortitude. And may be in this way defined, that it is an excellence of mynd concerning thynges of great importance or estimation, doing all thyng that is vertuous for the achieving of honour. But now I remember me, this word Magnanimitie being yet strange, as late borrowed out of the latyne, shall not content all men, and especially them whome nothing contents out of their accustomed Mumpsimus, I will adventure to put for Magnanimitie a word more familiar calling it good courage, which having respecte to the sayd definition, shall not seme moche inconveniency.”—*I.*, 289.

“In every of these things and their semblable is Modestie; whiche worde not being knowen in the englishe tonge, ne of al them which under stode latin, except they had redde good autours, they improperly named this vertue discretion. And now some men do as moche abuse the word modestie as the other dyd discretion. For if a man have a sadde countenance

at al times, and yet not beinge meued with wrathe, but pacient, and of moche gentillesse, they which wold be sure to be lerned, wil say that the man is of a great modestie ; where they shuede rather say that he were of a great mansuetude ; whiche terme, beinge semblably before this time unknowen in our tonge, may be by the sufferance of wise men nowe received by custome, whereby the terme shall be made familiar. That lyke as the Romane, translated the wisdome of Grecia in to their citie we may, if we liste, bring the lernynges and wisdomes of them both in to this realme of Englande, by the translation of their workes ; sens lyke entrepryse hath been taken by frenche men, Italions, and Germanes, for our no little reproche for our negligence and slouthe.”—*Ib.*, I, 168.

Such was Elyot's position. He believed that the English language was inferior as a literary means to the classic languages, that it was a good and patriotic thing to improve it and the chief direction of improvement lay in the vocabulary. He seems to have borrowed a good many words : Croft quotes a considerable list, to which additions might be made. The subsequent publication of the New English Dictionary shows that some of these words had been previously used. But a careful correction of this list would not be very useful, even if it could be carried out completely, for though it might be the case that some of these words had been already used, we cannot be sure that Elyot was aware of the use. His general idea is made plain by the extracts : lists of words serve only as illustration.

This opinion Elyot seems to have modified as time went on. *The Governour* was his first work : in *The Castel of Helth*, published three years afterward, we find much the same thing. The following list will give an idea of his usage. When it is recollected that *The Castel of Helth* is rather a small book of about two hundred pages, it will seem a considerable showing, though perhaps not more than we should expect from a medical book.

Abstersive, Adolescence, to Adust, Adustion, Aggregatours, to Appaire, Aposthume, Bayne, Carayne, Carnosity, Condyte, Conglutinate, Constrictise, Discrasies, Distemperance, Ductuosity, Egritude, to Expulse, to Extenuate, to Extinct, to be Fatigate, Fricasies, Fricacions (rubblings), Fumish, Fumosities, Gourmandise, Gestation ("that is to say where one is carried"), *to Humect, to Incende, Incision, Infarced, Ingurgitation, Oppilations, Poise, to Repugne, to Ruminare, Saciety* ("or fullness of bealie"), *Saltion, Sapience, Scotomies, Sembably, Scrupulosity, Ventosities.*

This is much the same sort of thing as is found in the *Governour*. Doubtless only a part of them are absolute borrowings: a number may be found before Elyot's time. But the list in general shows that its view was much as it had been in his earlier work. Later, however, Elyot seems to have receded from his position somewhat, although he makes no statement concerning any change of view. In his Latin Dictionary but a few of his inkhorn terms are to be found under their etyma. This in itself does not prove very much; the purpose of the Dictionary being to explain the meaning of Latin words, it would be natural not to use words so nearly like the Latin that they would not explain them. On the other hand familiar terms would seem to be especially called for. Still the fact that Elyot was now and then willing to translate Latin words by expressions so uncommon as *to infame* and *tourment* (engine) would show that this rule was not absolute with him. The Dictionary shows us that as a rule Elyot did not feel that the words he had himself borrowed were wholly acclimated, although he did feel himself at liberty to use them, if in a few cases only.

Other evidence, however, would lead us to think that he had modified his ideas. In *The Banket of Sapience*, about the same time as the Dictionary, there are not many very strange words—*exploitures, attemptate, distemperance* are not remarkable—and it would seem on the whole that he had somewhat modified his idea as to its being good to borrow extrava-

gantly. He may use somewhat pedantic forms, but there are none of the *egritudes* and *ventosities*, *maturities* and *humectings* of the earlier work. Nor is his style a highly Latinistic style: after a little study I should say that it was not much more Latinistic in general than Latimer's, although certainly the Latin words are apt to be more pedantic.

But in spite of any possible change of opinions, Sir Thomas Elyot may fitly stand as the leader of the movement for enriching the English language by copious borrowings from Greek or Latin, French or Italian. It is a position now rather discredited in the academic rhetorics, but there is no very obvious reason for the common position, except that it is certainly the best adapted for younger students. The language always has grown by the practice which Sir Thomas Elyot put into definite and exaggerated form, and very probably will continue to do so.

Good or bad, however, it is generally well that there should be opposition to this idea, for out of such opposition we get a better balance than we should have if the theory of constant borrowing were given a free field. The opposition has shown itself in late years by a movement to enhance the use of the Old English element in the language, as, for example, in William Morris's later prose. This is a very natural position and was held at the time of Sir Thomas Elyot's expression of his rather extravagant views. The best example of the opinion is found in the work of Sir John Cheke.

The influence of this remarkable man upon contemporary literature is not very accurately known. He was a teacher rather than a writer, and no doubt his opinions and ideas often come to expression in the work of other men. His views on this matter may be seen in a passage from the *Rhetoric* of Sir Thomas Wilson and in a letter to Sir Thomas Hoby. These two statements are well-known, most readily found in the introduction to Arber's edition of Ascham's *Scholemaster*. Besides these, however, there is a passage in

Strypes' *Life of Sir John Cheke*¹ which, though accessible enough, is not often quoted or mentioned.

Strype first mentions the efforts of Cheke to correct the spelling then current, his proposal to omit silent letters, and his indications of quantity. Next he says that "What he did further for the language was that he brought in a short and expressive way of writing without long and intricate periods." He also tells us that, like other scholars of the day, he wrote a beautiful hand. It is upon the matter of importance to us, however, that Strype is most detailed: the passage is as follows:

"And moreover in writing any discourse, he would allow no words but such as were true English, or of Saxon original; suffering no adoption of any foreign word into the English speech, which he thought was copious enough in itself, without borrowing words from other countries. Thus in his own translations into English he would not use any but pure English phrase and expression; which indeed made his style here and there a little affected and hard; and forced him to use sometimes odd and uncouth words, as desiirful, ungrevous, tollers for publicans, etc.; which perhaps might occasion that rude character Sir John Hayward gave of him, allowing his eloquence in the Latin and Greek tongues: but for other sufficiencies, so far as it appears by his books, pedantic enough. A censure too rash upon a man of such fame and learning, and indeed bespake Hayward to be but little acquainted with him and his books; being far otherwise thought as by those learned men his contemporaries that well knew him, and wanted not for skill to judge of men. But to return where we were, that indeed was Cheke's conceit, that in writing English none but English words should be used, thinking it a dishonour to our mother tongue, to be beholden to other nations for their words and phrases to express our mind.

¹ Published for the Parker Society.

“Upon this account Cheke seemed to dislike the English translation of the Bible, because in it there were so many foreign words which made him once attempt a new translation of the New Testament; and he completed the Gospel of St. Matthew, and made an entrance into St. Mark; wherein all along he laboured to use only true English Saxon words. The original under his own hand still remains in the MS. library at Beneit College, Cambridge. A specimen whereof, for the reader’s diversion I shall here set down.”

[Here are inserted the authorized version and Cheke’s translation of Matthew I. 17–20, and II. i.]

“Yet one may observe in this so overlaboured a translation (as I may term it) he is forced to make use of several words of foreign derivation.”¹

The translation of Matthew and a part of Mark, here mentioned, was edited by Goodwin in 1843 (London), and from our present standpoint is most interesting. A selection from the most noteworthy words makes very clear the theory and practice. It seems useful to add the corresponding words in the translations of Wiclif and Tyndale, which latter is the same, except in a few instances, as the “Great Bible” which I suppose to have been the one that Cheke “seemed to dislike.”

MATTHEW.	CHEKE.	WICLIF.	TYNDALE.
i. 1	stock	generacioun	generacion
i. 46	tollers	pupplians	publicans
i. 17	out-peopling	transmygracion	captivite
ii. 1	wisards	astromyens	wise men
ii. 16	was plaied withal	was mocked	was deceyved
iv. 24	mooned	lunatik	lunatyke
25	the tencitee	decapoli	the ten citees
v. 18	goo away	passe	perisshe
vi. 19	hord	gadir	gadare
vii. 22	mighty things	vertues	miracles
23	unlawfulness	wickednes	iniquite
viii. 5	hundreder	centurien	centurion
xi. 16	kind	generacioun	generacion

¹*Life of Sir John Cheke*, p. 161.

MATTHEW.	CHEKE.	WICLIF.	TYNDALE.
xii. 31	ill-speed	blasfemy	blasphemy
34	of spring	generacion	nacioun
35	stoor hous	gode thingis	treasure
xiii. 3	biwords	parablis	similitudes
21	but a forwhile	temporal	but a season
44	hoord	tresoure	treasure
52	lerned man	wise man	scribe
xv. 19	ill wordes	blasphemyes	blasphemye
xvi. 1	token	tokene	sign
2	teaching	teaching	doctrine
2	church	chirch	congregation
xix. 16	everlasting	everlasting	eternal
xx. 3	communplace	cheping	market place
22	wash		baptise
	washing		baptism
25	do overmaster	ben lordes	have dominacion
xxii. 3	waiters	mynystis	ministers
20	on writing	the writing above	superscripcion
23	gain rising	rising agen to life	resurrection
30	uprising	" " " "	"
xxiii. 12	set upper	enhausid	exalted
15	freshman	prosilite	[to bring one in to your belief]
33	offspring	[eddris briddes]	generacion
34	meeting places	synagogis	synagoges
xxiv. 12	unlawfulness	wickedness	iniquite
xxvi. 2	crossed	crucified	crucified
71	gaat hous	gate	porch
xxvii. 53	rising again	resurexcion	resurreccion
24	it was no boot	it profited nothing	he prevailed noth- ing
60	grave	birial	tombe
MARK.			
i. 8	wasched	baptised	baptised
13	gods messengers	aungelis	aungels
20	hinds	hired servants	hyred servaunts

These are fair examples of Cheke's substitutions. Some of them are familiar already. What is still to remark is that although as above we find in a good many cases English expressions (or words which Cheke considered English) in place of the foreign words of Tyndale and Wiclif, yet not

infrequently Cheke has either retained or used a word of obviously foreign origin.

MATTHEW.	CHEKE.	WICLIF.	TYNDALE.
i. 19	divorce	left her	put her away
20	angel	angel	angel
23	virgin	virgin	mayde
iv. 23	synagoogs.	synagogis	synagog
	Cf. xxiii. 34		
vi. 2	hypocrites	ypocritis	ypocrites
vii. 6	margarites	margaritis	pearles
29	scribes. Cf. xiii. 52	scribis	scribes
ix. 3	blasphemeth.	blasphemeth	blasphemeth
	Cf. xii. 31; xv. 19		
ix. 12	phisicion	leche	phisicion
13	sacrificed	sacrifice	offer
x. 13	salute	greet	salute
xi. 13	propheseyd	profecieden	did foresai
xiii. 20	receiveth	takith	receaveth
22	deceit	fallace	dissaytfullness
34	parables	parablis	similitudes
xiv. 26	phantasm	fantum	spirit
xviii. 24	talants	talentis	talentts
xix. 12	ennouches	gildingis	chaste
xx. 19	crucified	crucified	crucified
xxii. 5	mercat	merchandise	merchandyse
17	tribute	rent	tribute
20	image	ymage	ymage
43	spirit	spirit	spirite
xxiii. 7	curtesi	salutations	gretyngs
11	minister	mynystre	servaunt
xx. 24	desolation	discumfort	desolation
xxvi. 28	testament	testament	testament
53	legeons	legions	legions
MARK.			
i. 4	repentaunce	penaunce	repentaunce.

These few instances are enough to show that Cheke for some reason or other did not himself carry out his theory to the uttermost, even in this translation. There are also a number of cases where he has failed to substitute an English word for a foreign, in which I am inclined to believe that his

knowledge of etymology was at fault rather than his desire for purity of language. He writes *waiters* for *ministers* xxii. 3; *crossed* for *crucified* xxvi. 2; *church* for *congregation* xvi. 2; *agreed* for *reconciled* v. 24; *wasted* for *desolate* xii. 25. In such cases I suppose that he may have considered his own expressions to be native English. But with a certain unwillingness to be too particular as to his Old English scholarship, I have not pushed this enquiry very far. One thing is quite obvious and must be borne in mind: the translation was an experiment. Several times a foreign word naturalized in English is first written with a gloss and then discarded in favor of a native English expression. Thus in ix. 3 we have *blasphemeth*, and in xii. 31 *ill-speech*, and in xv. 19 *ill-words*. In xx. 19 we have *crucified*, and in xxvi. 2 *crossed*. In iv. 23 we have *synagoogs*, and in xxiii. 34 *meeting-places*. In x. 1 he seems somewhat doubtful as to writing an unfamiliar English word for a familiar foreign expression, for he writes *apostols* with the gloss "the truetorn of this is as much as to say a frosent." The gloss to Ἐκκλησία (xvi. 12) is interesting. He translates it by *Church* and remarks "and by ÿ truetorn of ÿ word may be named the outcalled. . . . We following ÿ Greek call yis house, as the north doth yet moor truli sound it, ÿ Kurk, and we moor corrupter and french-like ÿ Church."

But in spite of its variations this work of Cheke's shows very clearly his ideas and his purpose. He never finished this translation nor did he publish it, and the work which he did publish is by no means remarkable for its purism in this direction. While it certainly lacks any admixture of new borrowings, it has, on the other hand, very few of the strained English expressions exemplified above. I have noted in *The Hurt of Sedition*, *dehort*, *appair*, *acraseth* on the one hand, and *upstirres*, *unquietness*, *blood-shedders*, *purse-pickers*, *quarrel-makers*, *men-pleasers* on the other, which, though not all strictly English expressions, seem to have taken the place of more familiar foreign words.

Cheke's exact influence would be very hard to determine: certainly his words were not wholly wasted on Ascham and Wilson. The position of the former is well known so far as concerns his general use of English instead of Latin, but he does not give any evidence of following Cheke's more advanced opinions.

The position of Sir Thomas Wilson is now of interest. He was not so much a man of letters as a scholar at first and a man of public affairs afterward. He held a number of high positions, was ambassador to Scotland, Portugal, the Netherlands, a Member of Parliament, Dean of Durham, and so on.

His Rhetoric was published in 1553. The first part is, I believe, modeled upon Quintilian. The third book, however, is more his own. It is "of apte chusing and framing of words and sentences together called Elocution." This term we more commonly give to the process of delivery, but in the Latin rhetoric it stood for what we now call Diction. Wilson divides it into four parts: Plainnesse, Apteness, Composition, Exornacion, and in speaking of "Plainnesse, what it is" he puts himself on record on the side of those who would have their English with as little foreign admixture as possible.

"Eamong al other lessons, this should first be learned, [†] we never affect any strange ynke-horne termes, but so speake as is commonly received: neither sekyng to be over fine, nor yet living over carelesse, usyng our speache as most men do and ordering our wittes, as the fewest have doen. Some seke so farre for outlādishe Englishe, that they forget altogether their mother's lāgage. And I dare swere this, if some of their mothers were alive, thei were not able to tell, what thei say, and yet these fine Englishe clerkes wil saie thei speake in their mother tongue, if a mā should charge the for cōfiterfeityng the kynges English. Some farre iourneid ientlemē at their return home, like as thei love to go in forein apparell, so thei wil powder their talke wth oversea lāgage. He that

cometh lately out of France, wil talke Frêche English and never blushe at the matter. Another choppes in with Angleso Italiano : the lawyer wil store his stomack with the pratyng of Pedlars. The Auditor in makyng his accompt and rekenyng, cometh in with sise sould, and catere denere, for VI. Š. iiii. d. The fine courtier will talke nothing but Chaucer. The misticall wise menne, and poetical Clerkes will speake nothyng but quaint proverbes, and blind allegores, delityng much in their own darkenesse, especially, where none can tell what thei do saie. The unlearned or foolish phantasticall, that smells but of learnyng (such felowes as have been learned men in their daies) will so latine their tongues, that the simple cannot but wonder at their talke, and thynk surely they speak by some Revelacion. I know them that think Rhetorique, to stand wholly upon darke woords, and he that can catch an ynke horne word by the taile, him thei count to be a fine Englisheman, and a good Rhetorician."

After these remarks he gives various examples of misuse of language, most of which, to tell the truth, seem to have arisen from ignorance rather than pedantry. Afterward follows the often-quoted passage ("Now whereas words be received, as well Greeke as Latin, &c., f. 87. 2) in which he points out that many words of foreign origin are in common and easy use. "The folie is espied, when either we will use such words as few men doe use, or use them out of place when another might serve."

Passing over his treatment of Aptness and Composicion we come to Exoruacion. Here he points out that we may properly "commend and beautify our talk with divers goodlye coloures, and delightful translations [metaphors] that our speache may seem as bryghte and precious as a ryche stone is fayre and orient." But the main idea on the vocabulary is in the passage quoted.

Here it may be remarked that the other rhetoricians of the century say very little on the subject. As is noticed in our beginning, it is not always in the systematic treatises that we

shall find the rhetorical ideas. The greater number of the rhetorics of the sixteenth century are without any ideas at all, certainly upon the present subject. Cox makes no reference to the vocabulary. Sherry's book is just what it pretends to be, namely, a treatise upon the Figures of Grammar and Rhetoric. Under the head of figures he of course speaks of many things which would seem to come rather under the head of faults. Thus the term Baralexis he explains as "where a rude word or of a strange tong is brought into the Roman tong. In the English speach there be so many that some think we speak little English or none at all" (v. b). Like Sherry, Peacham writes on Figures; like him he throws little light on the literary movement of the time. I find but one allusion to our subject; in speaking of metaphor he writes: "The sixt manner of speaking or writing by this figure is, when we signifie the imitation of another man's property or fashion: this forme of speaking is very usual in the Greeke tongue, and somewhat it is used in the Latine, as where they say, *Patrissare*, *matrissare*, *Platonissare*, that is to say, to imitate his father, to imitate his mother, to imitate Plato, which forme our tongue can hardly imitate, except we should say, he doth fatherise, Platonise, temporise, which is not much in use. Yet the English tongue endeavoreth what it can to speake by this part as where it saith I cannot court it, I cannot Italian it."¹ These remarks find a comment in Nash, who will be mentioned later. Fenner's *Artes of Logic and Rhetorike* contains nothing to our purpose.

There remains *The Arte of English Poesie*. Puttenham's view (Lib. III, Chap. III) is as applicable to prose as to poetry. Our maker, or poet, he holds, must look to his language carefully and be careful that he gets what is natural, pure, and the most usual. He must avoid the language of the marches or frontiers or port towns on account of the

¹ Henry Peacham. *The Garden of Eloquence*. London, 1577.

strangers, the speech of the Universities on account of scholars (who "use much peevish affectation of words out of the primitive languages") and the upland villages on account of the rustic and uncivil people. He must avoid archaisms and not follow Piers Plowman, Gower, Lydgate, nor yet Chaucer. He must avoid dialect, any speech used beyond the river Trent. He adds that "peradventure some small admonition be not impertinent, for we find in our English writers many wordes and speaches amendable, and ye shall see in some many inkhorne terms so ill-affected brought in by men of learning as preachers and schoolemasters; and many straunge terms of other languages by Secretaries and Merchaunts and travaillours, and many dark wordes, and not usual nor well sounding, though they be dayly spoken in Court. Wherefore great heed must be taken by our maker in this point that his choice be good."¹

From all this we get an idea of rather a jarring set of ideas and opinions. There was a desire for good English. But there were all sorts of possibilities, and various innovations. There was dialect to be avoided, especially, it would seem, the Scotch. There were archaisms, defended and denied, particularly the dippings in the well of English undefiled. Then there were technical terms of the various professions, and importations by travelers in France and Italy. And there were the inkhorn terms of the scholars and the uncouth formations of the homely theorists.

Most of these innovations had their champions ardent and devoted. None, however, was quite so vigorous as one who sustained no cause save that of doing just as he chose. Thomas Nash, in his use of language, was of a type which may be found in every literature. He based himself, perhaps, upon Aretino, he had something of the linguistic exuberance of Rabelais. He regarded restrictions as to words much as did Richter, Carlyle or Whitman. Of course, therefore, he

¹ Ed. Arber, p. 157.

came into these controversies. One can hardly follow him through his labyrinthine squabbles, with Gabriel Harvey, say, but a note or two will be useful.

Without being too particular as to the compliments interchanged by these gentlemen, it may be remarked that Harvey was a great admirer of Cheke and Ascham, whom he mentions after Sidney and Spenser, saying that "Sir John Cheek's style was the honybee of Plato: and M. Ascham's Period the Syren of Isocrates."¹ He was for English himself without being a devoted Chaucerian. In writing about Nash he allowed himself certain liberties for which he thus apologises: "In trimming of which description, though I have found out and fecht from the mint some few new words to coulour him, grant me pardon, I think them fit for him who is so limned and coullored with all new-found villainie."²

Nash, however, fell upon him at once. He begins his *Four Letters Confuted* by reproaching Harvey for using Latin English. He uses himself, and underscores, the words *addoulce* and *entelechy*, and proceeds: "Do you know your owne misbegotten bodgery *entelechy* and *ad doulce*? With these two Hermophrodite phrases, being half Latin and half English, hast thou pulled the very guts out of the inkhorne."³ Afterward (p. 262) he gathers together a collection of Harvey's inkhornisms. It must be confessed that they are not so very bad; such expressions as *deceitful perfidy*, *addicted to theory*, *perfunctory discourse* are not so very terrible, though they may have sounded more strangely in Elizabethan ears.

As for Nash his chief aim seems to have been to vilify; he by no means troubled himself about consistency. In *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem* we find more strange expressions than he could have got out of all Harvey's works, of which the following may serve as samples: *callichrimate*, Works, IV, 51; *investurings*, 72; *sacrificatory*, 76; *delinquishment*, 78; *succoursuers*, 116; *intercessionate*, 156; *deploment*, 30. There

¹ Works, Ed. Grosart, I, 266.

² Works, III, 6.

³ Works, Ed. Grosart, II, 191.

are also a great number of derivatives in *-ize*, which are worth particular mention, *e. g.*, *unmortalize*, 70; *carionized*, 75; *oblivionize*, 79; *anatomize*, 109; and many others. Of these some were in good use at the time, but others are obviously new coinages. There was some comment upon these particular derivatives on the appearance of the first edition of *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*, and in the second edition Nash commented upon the matter.

"The plodding sort of unlearned Zoilists about London exclaim that it is a puffed-up stile and full of prophane eloquence; others object to me the multitude of my boystrous compound words and the often coyning of Italionate verbs which end all in Ize as mummianize, tympanize, tirranize. To the first array of my clumperton antagonists this I answer, that my stile is no otherwise puffed up, than any mās should be which writes with any spirit; and whom would not such a divine subiect put a high ravisht Spirite into? For the prophaness of my eloquence, so they may tearm the eloquence of Sainct Austen, Jerome, Chrysostome prophane, since none of them but takes unto himself more liberty of Tropes, Figures, and Metaphors, and alleadging Heathen examples and Histories.

"To the second rancke of reprehenders that complain of my boystrous compound words, and ending my Italionate coyned words all in Ize, thus I reply: that no winde that blowes strong but is boystrous, no speech or words of any power or force to confute or persuade, but must be swelling and boystrous. For the compounding of my words, therein I imitate rich men who having gathered store of white single money together, convert a number of those small little sentes unto great pieces of gold, such as double pistols and portugues. Our English tongue of all languages most swarmeth with the single money of monosyllables,¹ which are the only scandal

¹ Cf. Gascoigne, *The Steele Glass* (Ed. Arber), p. 35: "The most ancient English words are of one sillable so that the more monasyllables that you use the truer Englishman you shall seem, and the lesse you shall smell of the Inkehorne."

of it. Books written in them and no other, seem like shop keepers boxes, that containe nothing else, save halfe-pence, three farthings and twopences. Therefore what did me I, but having a huge heap of those worthless shreds of small English in my *Pia Mater's* purse to make the royaller show with them to men's eyes, had them to the compounders immediately, and exchanged them four into one, and others into more, according to the Greek, French, Spanish and Italian.

"Come, my maisters, inure your mouths to it, and never trust me but when you have tride the commodity of carrying much in a small roome; you are like the Apothecaries use more compounds than simples, and graft wordes as men do their trees to make them more fruitful. My upbraided Italianate verbes are the least chime of a thousand, since they are grown in general request with every good Poet.

"Besides they carry far more state with them then any other, and are not halfe so harsh in their desinence as the old hobling English verbes ending in R; they express more than any other verbes whatever, and their substantives would be quite barraine of verbs but for that ending. This word mumianized at the beginning of my first Epistle is shrewdly called in question for no other reason that I can conceive but that his true derivative which is mummy is somewhat obscure also. To Phesitiens and their confectioners it is as familiar as Mumchance amongst Pages, being nothing else but mans flesh long buried and broyled in the burning sands of Arabia. Hereupon I have taken up this phrase of Jerusalem's Mum-mianized earth (much as to say) as Ierusalem's earth manured with man's flesh."—Works, IV, 7.

So to those who would use Chaucerisms, or Italianate phrases, or traveler's talk, or inkhorn terms, or native "tritors," we may add such as maintained the right to use any sort of word they could make up out of their own heads. And here we may leave the sixteenth century. It was in style a time of no fixed principles; to the more polished eighteenth century it seemed merely barbarous. But it was a

time of ideas; men were thinking. There has hardly been a movement in style, so far as the vocabulary is concerned, since their time, which was not to some degree anticipated by Elyot, Cheke, Gardiner, Harvey, or Nash, or even by one of a thousand nameless euphuists whose fancy may have lasted but the hour of court fashion, or of the crowd of scholars whose learning never influenced more than the few who read their now-forgotten pamphlets.

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